

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

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This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-20. (cancelled)

21. (currently amended) A device for directing energy to a target area of skin, comprising:
an energy source that emits energy;
an intermediate substance comprising a solid layer of thermally conductive material adapted to be placed against a target area of the skin, wherein the intermediate substance is configured to block the emitted energy so as to prevent any emitted energy from directly striking the target area of the skin; and

an absorbing material embedded in the intermediate substance that is configured to absorb the emitted energy, to convert the emitted energy into thermal energy, to prevent any emitted energy from reaching the target area of the skin without being absorbed by the intermediate substance and converted into thermal energy, and to thereby provide heat which passes through the solid layer to the target area in an amount sufficient to modify the skin tissue by causing pores in the target area to expand without removing skin tissue from the target area,

wherein the solid layer is a different material from the absorbing material, and the solid layer is configured to prevent the absorbing material from contacting the target area of the skin.

22. (previously presented) The device of claim 21 wherein the intermediate substance comprises a suspension containing high absorbing particles.

23. (previously presented) The device of claim 21 wherein the intermediate substance comprises a thin film containing high absorbing particles.

24. (cancelled)

25. (previously presented) The device of claim 21 wherein the intermediate substance comprises a paper containing a highly absorbing substance.

26. (cancelled)

27. (cancelled)

28. (cancelled)

29. (previously presented) The device of claim 21 wherein the intermediate substance comprises a solid mixture containing highly absorbing particles.

30. (cancelled)

31. (cancelled)

32. (cancelled)

33. (previously presented) The device of claim 21 wherein the intermediate substance comprises a thermal insulator containing highly absorbing particles.

34. (previously presented) The device of claim 21 wherein the intermediate substance comprises a layer of thermal conductor containing highly absorbing particles.

35. (previously presented) The device of claim 21 wherein the intermediate substance comprises a metallic layer containing highly absorbing particles.

36. (cancelled)

37. (cancelled)

38. (currently amended) A method of treating a skin blemish, comprising:

emitting radiative energy towards a target area of the blemish;

blocking transmission of the radiative energy to the target area by interposing an intermediate substance configured to absorb that absorbs the radiative energy to produce heat

and to transmit the heat to the target area, wherein the intermediate substance comprises a solid film having a first side configured to be placed against the skin blemish, and the intermediate substance further comprises an absorbing material positioned on a second side of the solid film, wherein the first side is opposite to the second side, and wherein the absorbing material absorbs the radiative energy to produce heat, and wherein the solid film is configured to prevent any portion of the absorbing material from contacting the target area; and

allowing the intermediate substance to conduct the heat to the target area to a degree that modifies the target area of the blemish by expanding expands pores in the target area and thereby enhance transdermal drug delivery, wherein the pore expansion occurs due to thermal effects from the heat conducted to the target area without removing material from the target area.

39. (previously presented) The method of claim 38 wherein the intermediate substance comprises a thin insulating material mixed with grains of material capable of absorbing at least one frequency band of the electromagnetic energy.

40. (previously presented) The method of claim 38 wherein the emitted radiative energy comprises pulses from a laser.

41-44. (cancelled)

45. (previously presented) The device of claim 21 further comprising a heat removing mechanism adapted to remove heat from skin.

46. (previously presented) The device of claim 21, wherein the absorbing material is embedded in the intermediate substance in sufficient density to convert at least 20% of the emitted energy to heat.

47. (previously presented) The device of claim 21, wherein the absorbing material is embedded in the intermediate substance at a plurality of absorbing locations.

48. (previously presented) The device of claim 21, wherein the energy source comprises a diode laser.

49. (previously presented) The method of claim 38, wherein the radiate energy source comprises laser emissions.

50. (previously presented) The method of claim 38, wherein the radiate energy source comprises ultrasound.

51. (previously presented) The method of claim 38, wherein the radiate energy source comprises microwave.

52. (cancelled)

53. (cancelled)

54. (previously presented) The method of claim 38, further comprising actively cooling the target area.

55. (currently amended) A device for treatment of a target area of skin, the device comprising a handpiece, the handpiece comprising:

an energy source that emits energy;

an intermediate substance on a first end of the handpiece of the device, the intermediate substance configured to contact the target area of skin, the intermediate substance comprising a solid layer having a first side adapted to be placed against the target area of skin, the intermediate substance comprising an absorbing material embedded in the intermediate substance that absorbs at least a portion of the energy emitted by the energy source, wherein the absorbing material is positioned at a second side of the solid layer, wherein the intermediate substance is configured to block and/or absorb [[all]] emitted energy directed at the intermediate material from the energy source, and the intermediate material prevents exposure of the skin to any energy emitted from the energy source other than thermal energy, and wherein the solid layer is formed from a different material from the absorbing material, and the solid layer is configured to prevent any contact between the absorbing material and the skin; and

wherein the intermediate substance is configured to convert at least a portion of the energy emitted by the energy source into thermal energy, and the intermediate substance is configured to transmit at least a portion of the thermal energy to the target area of skin when the

intermediate substance is placed against the target area of skin, wherein the thermal energy transmitted to the target area of skin is sufficient to cause skin pores in the target area to expand.

56. (cancelled)

57. (previously presented) The device of claim 21 wherein the intermediate substance is positioned within a cap, wherein the cap is replaceably attached to a main body of the device.

58. (previously presented) The device of claim 57, wherein the cap comprises a generally cylindrical shape having a circumferential external surface comprising an insulating material.

59. (previously presented) The device of claim 55, wherein the energy source is configured to provide electromagnetic energy.

60. (previously presented) The device of claim 55, wherein the energy source comprises a laser.

61. (previously presented) The device of claim 55, wherein the output of the energy source is less than about 5 W.

62. (previously presented) The device of claim 55, wherein the energy source comprises an electrical heater.

63. (previously presented) The device of claim 55, further comprising an element configured to remove energy from the absorbing material.

64. (previously presented) The device of claim 56, wherein the intermediate substance is positioned within a cap, wherein the cap is replaceably attached to the handpiece.

65. (previously presented) The method of claim 38, wherein blocking transmission of the radiative energy to the target area by interposing an intermediate substance comprises exposing a surface area of the absorbing material to the radiative energy, wherein the surface area of the absorbing material exposed to the radiative energy comprises an area of at least 3 mm².

66. (previously presented) The method of claim 65, wherein the surface area of the absorbing material exposed to the radiative energy comprises an area of at least 10 mm².

67. (previously presented) The method of claim 66, wherein the surface area of the absorbing material exposed to the radiative energy comprises an area of at least 1 cm².
68. (previously presented) The method of claim 65, wherein the radiative energy is scanned across the surface area of the absorbing material.
69. (new) The device of claim 55, wherein the solid layer comprises a solid layer of metal configured to be placed against the target area of skin.